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ZAMBIA-RHODESIA: The Zambian Government is quietly circumventing its border closure by allowing rail traffic to enter Zambia from Rhodesia.

Despite Lusaka's public stance against using Rhodesian transport routes, Zambian imports are again reaching the country via the Rhodesian railroad, [REDACTED]

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The government claims that the incoming freight is either cargo consigned to Zaire that is not affected by the border closure or is Zambia-bound cargo that has been bottled up in Rhodesia. [REDACTED]

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The fact that Lusaka was beginning to waver surfaced last week in Mozambique. An item in a semi-official paper announced that Mozambique railway authorities were accepting shipments for Zambia via Rhodesia. Portuguese officials confirm that materiel from the ports of Beira and Lourenco Marques--two of the most important ports used by Lusaka before the trade boycott--began moving in mid-March.

The Zambians are clearly beginning to feel the pinch as stocks of consumer goods and other imports dwindle. The decision to revert to the Rhodesian railroad for imports is designed to stave off possible popular discontent. There has been no relaxation of the ban on copper exports or road traffic through Rhodesia, however, and Lusaka is still hopeful that foreign assistance will enable it to re-route foreign trade. Aid commitments were received last week from Canada, the UK, and West Germany, but the massive assistance that is needed has been slow in coming. The Zambians have little choice but to use the Rhodesian rail line for the time being. [REDACTED]

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NOTE

TURKEY: President Cevdet Sunay has blocked the presidential bid of a candidate sponsored by the leaders of the country's three largest political parties, according to a press report. Sunay, possibly reflecting the views of the military high command, refused late Monday to appoint the politicians' compromise choice for the presidency, Muhittin Taylan, to parliament. Only members of the legislature are eligible to be elected president. Taylan, 63-year-old chief justice of the Constitutional Court, briefly appeared to be a contender yesterday as political leaders sought to resolve the two-week-old impasse over the presidency. Sunday night, the Senate turned down a proposal to extend Sunay's term for two years, and yesterday the legislators cast the ninth inconclusive presidential ballot since voting began on 13 March. President Sunay's seven-year term expires on 28 March.

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